

# The American Teacher

*Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy.*

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## Judgment by Peers



HOW, then, are we to estimate and to improve teaching ability in one another?

We estimate one another pretty accurately now. Every profession estimates its own members more accurately than any outsider can.

We also improve ourselves and one another by setting forth ideals which we collectively and severally try to realize.

Any teacher who does not have ideals is not a candidate in good standing for the judgment of his fellows.

If we must have an over-man whose business it should be to crystallize and to express opinions, let him be exalted by the act of his fellows, provided he will return to the ranks when his term of office is finished, and become as one of them.

# VIEWS OF SOME LEADERS ON DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION

WILLIAM C. RUEDIGER

The George Washington University

AMONG THE EDUCATIONAL leaders that have discussed the problem of democracy in school management and administration are John Dewey, formerly of the University of Chicago but now of Columbia University; Wilbur S. Jackman, until his death a few years ago a member of the faculty of the School of Education of the University of Chicago and editor of the *Elementary School Teacher*; and David Kinley, dean of the graduate school of the University of Illinois.

Space does not permit me to consider in detail the arguments advanced by these three educators. The paper by David Kinley appears in the *Elementary School Teacher* for April, 1906. This paper constitutes an impassioned appeal and is well worth reading, but it deals more with the personal qualities that are desirable or undesirable in administrative positions and therefore falls largely outside of the topic in hand. This is not because the personality of the superintendent, principal, president, or dean is of secondary importance, but because this cannot be directly controlled in legislative ways. An autocrat has no business in an executive office, but he often gets there, and after he is there the problem is to make the best of him. This can certainly not be done by giving him a free hand to issue orders that must be obeyed. He will chafe under the restrictions of the mutual rights and responsibilities that a democratic system of legislation imposes, but he will do the system the least harm by being obliged to conform to these restrictions, and under this conformity the talents for leadership that he possesses may do much good. The school superintendent especially must possess in a high degree the qualities of leadership. Under a democratic system of

control the major part of his influence would depend upon these qualities.

But granted that the superintendent possesses these qualities, granted that he runs the school system smoothly and pleasantly on the ordinary basis, it would still be pertinent to discuss the question of democracy in education. Teachers and pupils, like other people, can develop to their full stature of personality and efficiency only under the stress of opportunity for initiative and the responsibility that this entails. To have a system run by an autocrat, no matter how benevolent, may spell instrumental efficiency for a time, but this time is likely to be short. Permanent efficiency in a system, be this system a school system or a commercial or governmental enterprise, must be rooted in the individuality, initiative and responsibility of its workers, and these qualities are incompatible with autocratic control. They can develop and function only under the fact and spirit of democracy.

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Wilbur S. Jackman's discussion of the question of democracy in education appears as an editorial in the *Elementary School Teacher* for January, 1906. This discussion is interesting because it takes its cue from a new plan of school administration proposed for Chicago by Dr. DeBey, a member of the Chicago Board of Education at the time. This plan, which is essentially democratic, is outlined as follows by Mr. Jackman:

"1. Redivision of the city into districts, each containing from ten to twenty schools.

2. Organization of all the principals and teachers in each district.

3. These organized bodies to act in a supervisory capacity in the direction of the educational affairs of the district.

4. Nomination of principals by the district organization of principals and teachers; the superintendent to have the power of veto, and the Board of Education the power to elect.

5. Abolition of the Board of District Superintendents.

6. Substitution, for the present board of six district superintendents, of twelve teachers holding principals certificates, to be selected by the organized principals and teachers of each district; these teachers to serve as critics.

7. Abolition of the promotional examination feature of the Normal School extension work, and the substitution of a differently organized merit system."

Some of the comments that Mr. Jackman makes on this plan and on the manner in which it was received are interesting enough to be worth quoting.

"As a study of human nature it is interesting to observe how these proposals were received by many members of the Board of Education and, editorially, by the public press. There was a great howl; nothing more intelligent, nothing more indicative of calm inquiry or of a disposition toward careful consideration—just a nine days' howl."

After pointing out that progressive commercial and manufacturing houses now sometimes institute systems for gaining the vital co-operation of their employees, and after pointing out the evil influence that an autocratic system of control has on the teaching corps, he states the principle underlying Dr. DeBey's plan as follows:

"The principle on which the proposed plan rests is simple, but fundamental. . . . The meaning is this: Under its operation everyone participating in the educational work of the city, from the superintendent and the members of the Board of Education to the humblest teacher, will have a position of influence and worth, measured and limited only by his ability to put brains into his work. . . . It seals the

doom of bossism in education. To be sure, nobody can object to this on theoretical grounds: it is the *practical* point that really rouses all opposition. It demolishes bossism by the board and the superintendent, and it destroys the hope of bossism by the teachers. . . . It substitutes for the system of bossism and fear the idea of co-operation and mutual consideration.

It is not intended here to belittle the great functions of superintendents and boards of education in the administration of a school system. Neither does Dr. DeBey's plan contemplate (as the public press assumed it did) reducing superintendents and boards of education to ciphers. On the contrary, it forecasts a higher field of usefulness than either can possibly attain under the present plan. . . . A hue and cry is raised at once, because it is assumed that such a plan must diminish the chance for initiative on the part of the superintendent and board. Paranthetically, of course, as against this, the fact that thousands of teachers in the schools of the country are deprived of *all* initiative by the present plan counts for nothing. The truth is, however, that, if under the new plan proposed anyone should fail to find room for initiative, it would be because the individual himself is not blessed with the article. The stimulus toward personal initiative would be immeasurably greater than it is under the present system. The consequent uplift to the character of school work would be enormous and general. There would not be a place left in the entire system that a small man could fill."

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One of the most profound discussions of the question of democracy in education is the contribution by Professor Dewey in the *Elementary School Teacher* for December, 1903. This discussion is divided into three parts as follows: (1) the definition of democracy; (2) the need of democracy for the teacher; and (3) the need of democracy for the child.

Dewey begins by saying that "modern life means democracy" and that "democracy means freeing intelligence for independent effectiveness—the emancipation of mind as an individual organ to do its own work. We naturally associate democracy, to be sure, with freedom of action, but freedom of

action without freed capacity of thought behind it is only chaos. If external authority in action is given up, it must be because internal authority of truth, discovered and known to reason, is substituted."

The limited recognition of the freedom of intelligence, or democracy, Dewey considers to be the fundamental need of the school to-day, both as regards the teacher and the pupil. This freedom of intelligence for the teacher is necessary for teachers, both to bring out the best that is in those now employed, and to attract the more competent young people to the teacher's calling. In the words of Dewey:

"The system which makes no great demands upon originality, upon invention, upon the continuous expression of individuality, works automatically to put and keep the more incompetent teachers in the school. It puts them there because, by a natural law of spiritual gravitation, the best minds are drawn to the places where they can work most effectively. The best minds are not especially likely to be drawn where there is danger that they may have to submit to conditions which no self-respecting intelligence likes to put up with; and where their time and energy are likely to be so occupied with details of external conformity that they have no opportunity for free and full play of their own vigor."

The argument that the average teacher is incompetent to take part in laying out the course of study or in initiating methods of instruction or discipline, Dewey answers by a double argument. First he points out that

"only by sharing in some responsible task does there come a fitness to share in it," and in the second place he points out that the argument proves too much. If the teachers are unfit to exercise intellectual initiative and to assume the responsibility of constructive work, then how can they be fit for the much more difficult and delicate task of guiding souls? The argument, Dewey insists, proves too much.

The arguments advanced by these educators may apparently all be boiled down to two; (1) that democracy will bring about more stability, harmony, and uniformity of progress in the school system, and (2) that it would increase the teaching efficiency both by improving the teachers now in the service and by attracting the more competent young men and women to the profession.

The relation that the participation of teachers in the determination of educational policies bears on the improvement of teachers in service has so far not been sufficiently considered. Teachers' institutes, teachers' meetings, reading circles, summer schools, and the like, are good as far as they go, but in some essential particulars they do not go far enough. Teachers are left without sufficient motive, which can be supplied only by giving the teachers a vital and official part in initiating and guiding educational policies. They must be given fuller professional responsibilities if the means that have been instituted for their improvement are to bear their proper fruit. Professional growth and spirit cannot be expected without the professional prerogatives that give them significance.

**"IF WE BELIEVE** that the wealth of the world is human, that it consists of beautiful men and beautiful women and beautiful children, people of accomplishment and goodness and power; if we believe in cause and effect, and are consequently practical people, with a turn for making our

plans come true, then the educational process which is to carry into effect this magnificent social creed must be a thoroly practical process which will keep this end resolutely in mind, and will as resolutely work for its accomplishment."—C. Hanford Henderson in "Education and the Larger Life."

## WANTED: A HIGHER TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

HENRY R. LINVILLE

NEW YORKERS are a busy people, and like all busy people they find it convenient and profitable to delegate duties to one another, instead of all trying to do everything. In commercial, industrial and technical occupations of various kinds, no doubt the method is the only feasible one; but public education is too much the business of everybody to warrant turning it over entirely into the hands of a few.

In theory, New York's educational system is in the control of the people, for the members of the Board of Education are appointed by the Mayor, who has more or less consistently endeavored to appoint citizens to safeguard the people's interests. But as a matter of fact, the representatives of the people have been too much occupied with their own private business to give adequate attention to the people's business in education. Besides, they have been too ill-informed about educational affairs actually to supervise and control the work of the Department. Therefore, the superintendents have been in large measure the controlling force in local education.

The superintendents control the educational situation in all matters pertaining to the courses of study, the appointment of principals and teachers, and their promotion, transfer or trial. In fact, the superintendents initiate practically every act of the Department that intimately affects the interests and welfare of teachers, except the establishments of new salary schedules. An additional point of much significance is that the City Superintendent of Schools is chairman of all the boards into which the supervising staff is divided, and he nominates the members of the boards. Thus, a system of educational government develops which tends to reflect the point of view of the chief supervising officer. Teachers and principals, of course, recognize the

City Superintendent, not the President of the Board of Education, as the "head" of the system. In time all subordinates tend to become adjusted to the will of the head of the system. Somewhat as the result of preoccupation and neglect the Board of Education finds itself obliged to accept in large measure the decisions of the City Superintendent, marvelling occasionally that its appointee should threaten the statutory guarantee of its official superiority.

In spite of the simplicity of the arrangement, the holder of this one-man power labors against fearful odds. The reasons are those that apply to any official who upholds an autocratic form of government. In the first place, whenever people manifest a growing passion for democracy, the autocratic official wastes much energy and time in maintaining his hold on authority. Inevitably it results in a great reduction in his productiveness. In the second place, the continual conflict with others who more or less intelligently question his policy without being able to modify it leads to widespread discontent, and even to personal animosity. Here again there is loss of progressive motion and great waste of co-operative opportunity. In the third place, the autocrat, no matter how keen his understanding or how great his constructive ability, cannot build up the best system without the experience and the thinking of the subordinate workers. He is but one man, if he is a consistent autocrat, and he thereby misses the benefit of collective experience and collective thinking.

While an educational autocrat is busy hammering away with old methods and old ideals some of his subordinates go ahead and thru collective experience come into the possession of ideals in some measure commensurate with the spirit of the age. The existence of this situation may mark the be-



ginning of the critical examination by teachers, not only of the educational system of New York City, but also of other educational systems conducted on similar lines.

A favorite mark for the educational critic is the high school department of a system. The most conspicuous personalities engaged in the direct management of the high schools are the principals. What manner of men they are, what they are trying to accomplish, and how and why they came to be appointed, are matters of knowledge to teachers and of deep concern to the people. It should not be thought unfair to judge the possible efficiency of an educational system in large part by the quality of its principals of high schools. Furthermore, it may be instructive to note the methods followed by an autocratic form of government in the selection of these officers.

High school principals in the City of New York are appointed by the Board of Education upon the nomination of the Board of Superintendents. Candidates for the position of principal make application to the Board of Superintendents, stating what they believe their qualifications to be. Practically they must be heads of departments in the high schools of New York City. There is no examination for candidates for a high school principalship. The applicants systematically interview all the members of the Board of Superintendents and the members of the High School Committee of the Board. Industrious persons have been known to interview all the forty-six members of the Board of Education.

Since all the candidates present with their application any documents containing favorable information which they happen to possess, it is supposed that the superintendents examine the papers for the purpose of making a preliminary judgment of the candidates. If the superintendents make further inquiries about the candidates, teachers do not know of the custom.

A day is appointed on which the candidates, of whom there are some-

times thirty or forty, assemble at the office of the Department of Education. In turn they are summoned singly before a committee that is made up of the Board of Superintendents and the High School Committee of the Board of Education. The rank and file of the candidates are asked one or two questions, such as, "What is your opinion of secret societies in high schools?" The answers are given orally, and the candidates are excused within a minute or two. The favored candidates may be detained as long as ten minutes, answering questions of various kinds. After all the candidates have been examined in this way a vote is taken, the decision made, and the nomination is forwarded to the Board of Education for ratification. A temporary license is issued to the appointee for three successive years, after which the City Superintendent may make the license permanent. So much for the routine of official procedure in the election of high school principals.

There are other facts to be noted which are not official but nevertheless real. A candidate to be successful must have shown by his career that he conforms absolutely to the established policy of the educational system. If he is known to have serious doubts as to the wisdom of the official system in vogue, he may as well content himself with the position he holds. He can go no higher. Being acceptable for his "loyalty" to things as they are, he must not fail to be personally acceptable to the head of the educational system. It is impossible to determine exactly what the basis of a favorable credit in this qualification is, but it is believed to be contingent upon conviction that the candidate has executive ability.

Doubtless the candidates are considered in private with reference to the possession of qualities of high order. However this may be, it is certain that the question of superior qualities in candidates never becomes a subject for serious consideration by the candidates themselves, by their friends, or by the

officials in a way to become known to the public. So far as the writer knows, the educational officials of New York City have never announced to any organization of teachers or to the public the standards they hold to in the selection of high school principals. When candidates are spoken of in local educational circles, the talk is not about ideals or standards, but rather about the man or the men probably favored by officials more or less powerful in local educational politics.

No one can successfully deny that mistakes have been made in some of the high school appointments, but the custom of the government is to support its appointees at any cost. No New York high school principal has ever lost his position, nor has any one been punished to the extent of the fact being made known to the public. Facts are gruesome, disagreeable and terrible things when they touch disastrously the character of a human being. Many dislike to speak them for good and sufficient reasons. But there is one thing that is more terrible than facts, and that is the official concealment of those facts that strike at the root of the life and influence of an institution designed to develop character in the young.

The official defense of high school principals charged with various forms of unmanly conduct has had its logical result in the minds of teachers. So has the opportunity offered for tyrannical power over teachers. So has the punishment of teachers who have tried to resist inhuman oppression. So has the secure tenure of office of the unfit and unworthy incumbents of the principal's chair. The logical result is a widespread cynicism, and a deep contempt for educational officialism. At the present time there are high schools in the City of New York where large numbers of teachers work indifferently except as they are compelled to show

results enough to insure their own promotion. They harbor suspicion and distrust, and live lives of ugly hatred for the work which they find it necessary to continue for economic reasons.

The weakness and the futility of the system of autocracy in education is apparent at every turn. Teachers, yes, even they, are showing signs of a growing passion for democracy. The educational autocracy has foolishly undertaken to crush the undeveloped desire for freedom by heedless acts of oppression. Again and again do we see energy and time wasted and dignity lowered thru official efforts to put down the spirit of resistance to unfair treatment.

A teacher in the New York educational system, or any other system, who should undertake to teach a class, while refusing to listen patiently to complaints of real or imagined injustice, one who was inclined to hoodwink the children with explanations that did not explain, or to browbeat and insult those inquisitive for the truth, or to deny recognition for good work done, would be condemned by everyone as a miserable failure. Yet the comparison has never occurred to those who could profit most by it.

It was stated in the May number of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER* that "The way out is not thru a change of masters, but thru a change of ideals." To this it might be added that a higher type of high school principal, or any kind of educational official, than those that are now so common can be obtained only when all persons who have professional or lay knowledge of the opportunities of that office, take part in the idealization of what the official should be. As we image the men and women who should lead our children to the light, so shall we find under favoring environment that more and more of our fellowmen will themselves become worthy to stand near the light.

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**What you would in the nation, you must first put into the schools.**  
—Humboldt.

# THE SCHOOLS OF YESTERDAY AND THE SCHOOLS OF TO-DAY

GABRIEL R. MASON

NOTHING IS SO COMMON in educational circles to-day as criticism of present school conditions. In fact, it has become quite fashionable to find fault, and one who does not join the host of experts in exposing the apparent weaknesses of our system is considered behind the times, and is honorably enrolled among the antiquated school-masters.

Thus it is the common talk of to-day that our pupils are not efficient. It is claimed that the public school graduates of to-day cannot be compared with those of yesterday in knowledge or in power. This criticism usually comes from "self-made business men" who are disappointed to find that their three-dollar-a-week errand boy, just out of school, cannot spell, figure or write as well as they themselves can. Naturally, such an opinion cannot be worth much and therefore need not concern us.

We find, however, that our pedagogical experts are writing bulky volumes and massive reports, much to the same effect. Undoubtedly, what they say is entitled to a good deal of respect and consideration. But, we find almost invariably when we come to examine their writings, that each of them looms up as the proud possessor of a panacea; without exception, the last chapter of their books always offers a remedy as the cure-all for our educational ills. While riding their own hobby to its fullest extent, be it

"Batavia plan," "method whole," "Sloyd work," "physiological age," "mental types" or "group system," they lose no time to cry from the house-tops that our schools are deteriorating.

The general public cannot but be impressed with such criticism. Many cherish a sentimental attachment to things of yore. The oft-quoted phrase, "Those were the happy days," well expresses their attitude. Thus among people emotionally prepared to accept views which exalt what has been, a fallacy has been current, bred by merchants who esteem themselves, educators who worship their hobbies and the great mass of men who adore the past.

We must not conclude from all this that our present system is perfect. It is not. This in no way, however, detracts from the truth implied above that our schools of to-day are efficient. As a body, our teachers are better fitted for their work, are more conscientious and have a broader point of view than the schoolmasters of one or two generations ago. As a result, not only do our pupils know their three R's, but, in addition, we find them, in many cases, at the age of thirteen and fourteen interested in music, art, literature and other subjects of cultural value.

Were the great mass of teachers of the cities asked to vote on the question, "Are the schools of to-day as efficient as those of yesterday?" undoubtedly, the affirmatives would have it by an overwhelming majority.

Our schools cannot long continue to give an advantage to a minority, nor to give more aid to the intellectual than the industrial interests in our life. The schools will have to keep the teaching even with the child's age; will have to adapt the teacher to the sex, circumstances, and purposes of the child;

will have to meet the demands of every kind and grade of industry; and will have to continue their oversight and aid until habits are somewhat established, and the ability to perform a definite work is reasonably assured. —Andrew S. Draper, New York State Commissioner of Education.



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*It is the aim of this paper to better the working conditions of the teacher, through sober criticisms of present educational administration, and through discussions tending toward a general realization of the democratic ideal in all matters affecting the schools.*

## SYSTEMATIZING A SYSTEM

SOME PEOPLE in educational and business circles have been expecting the Board of Estimate's Committee on School Inquiry to unearth grave financial scandals in the conduct of the New York City Department of Education. Nothing of the kind has happened, and probably will not happen. Grafting is a tangible evil, and can be stopped with an open system of bookkeeping—nothing could be easier. It is not so easy to correct bad features of record-keeping, or lax business methods of administration, when no one in the system is reaping a direct profit. Let us hope the Board of Estimate's Committee is handling the complicated problems that arise from those sources.

There are twenty-one high schools and hundreds of elementary schools in the City of New York. It is safe to say there are scores of systems of

managing the details of administration. Each system has a terminology which is peculiarly its own, altho limited numbers of technical terms would be recognized in the schools from which some of the ideas came originally. Administrative methods in schools usually "grow." In that growth there is imitated the method of physical accretion, not the method of physiological selection.

It is easy for a principal to take up with a new suggestion offered by a superintendent, an inspector, a fellow principal or by a teacher. It is difficult to the extent of requiring administrative genius, for him to measure the values of new ideas, and compare them with other ideas that are already in operation. The consequence is that the business of recording data in most schools in New York is characterized by endless overlapping and duplication. A committee-worker who can interpret the records in his own school can seldom interpret them in another. The services of a teacher in the other school must be enlisted. The adequate keeping of records is important, important enough to be put upon an efficient, time-saving and intelligible basis.

Here is an interesting field of operations for teachers who like to solve chaotic puzzles. THE AMERICAN TEACHER will welcome constructive articles on this subject.

## OUR SABBATICAL YEAR

MUCH APPRECIATIVE comment has come to this journal for the beginning it has made in a campaign for the general grant of a sabbatical year to teachers everywhere. The movement is not new, but now is an auspicious time for reviving the interest that has waned because of a belief that the campaign for the opportunity to study and grow was useless. But with growing professional self-respect has developed the idea that we can take the year or the half-year to study, and return to the city in service a benefit it cannot get in any other way.

It appears that the attention of the New York City Department of Education was first called to the value to be derived from sabbatical years for study and travel by Dr. Carl A. Krause of the Jamaica (N. Y.) High School, in 1908, after his return from a leave of absence in Europe.

In 1909, before the New York State Modern Language Association at Columbia University, New York, he advocated sabbatical years for modern language teachers in order to secure high efficiency.

In 1910 and 1911, he proposed the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that we, the members of the New York High School Teachers' Association, earnestly petition the Board of Education of the City of New York, to grant leave of absence on half pay every seventh year of service, or on full pay for half of every seventh year of service, to modern language teachers, for the purpose of study abroad. We believe that the Board of Education should give its most serious attention to this subject at this very time, when oral teaching will become practically compulsory, and thus aid in the improvement of modern language instruction in our schools.

The best method of attack will be for each body of teachers in high school work and also in the elementary school to put forward the special reasons why the system would benefit by granting them leaves of absence.

### **SUPERIOR MERIT AND GOOD MANNERS**

SO MANY COMPLAINTS have come to the staff of THE AMERICAN TEACHER concerning the official method of handling the "superior merit" campaign in the New York City Department of Education, that we feel bound to call attention to a few of them.

1. It is claimed that a visiting superintendent makes written notes on the defects that he observes in teachers, but does not make notes of facts favorable to the teachers.
2. It is reported that during the meetings of the Board of Exam-

iners which decides the status of teachers in the salary schedule, a question invariably asked is, "What have you against this teacher?"

3. It is said that the bearing of the Board of Examiners toward teachers who ask for a second hearing is unfriendly. A gruff voice calling out, "Well, what have you to say for yourself?", signifies much more than unfriendliness. It implies contempt for the petitioner.

Teachers will continue to be treated with contempt until they collectively demand respectful treatment from all persons, no matter what their official stations may be. "Teachers' Interests" Committees, take notice!

### **CONFIDENTIAL**

TO SUBSCRIBERS ONLY:—

You may have noticed that hitherto we have made no hysterical, glaring, red-lettered appeals for help. We have refrained simply because there was no need for such appeals. THE AMERICAN TEACHER has succeeded even far beyond our own expectations; but the future cannot take care of itself. Here is where we want you to give us a listening ear: We shall ask for no donations!

Many of our subscribers have sent us from one to three subscriptions for friends whose interest they wanted to enlist. Is this hint sufficient for you? Will you not help us spread the gospel of democracy in education by sending us a subscription or two for some friend or friends? And if you care to do it, why not send it to us to-day? To-morrow will be a different morrow, and some of us forget the resolutions of yesterday.

Will you help us in our efforts to make our work more tolerable and more honorable?

The public esteem should be increased by getting superior men and women to teach, training them more adequately and paying them more, and also by showing the nation the importance of education as a means to its welfare.—From Edward L. Thorndike's "Education."

## EFFICIENCY VERSUS DEMOCRACY

BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG

THE LAST REFUGE of autocracy is the pretext that it is the bulwark of "efficiency." And there are many intelligent people with a native bias in favor of democracy who allow themselves to be befuddled by the specious arguments that would establish an irreconcilable conflict between democracy and efficiency. It is easy to point to the inefficiency of large masses of the world's workers; it is easy to point to the exceptional ability of the exceptional Napoleon of intrigue or of finance. But such illustration demonstrates no inherent incompatibility between democracy and efficiency.

In a canvass of several hundred men of science made by Prof. J. McKeen Cattell of Columbia University, with the object of obtaining the views of these men upon the most desirable form of university organization, three hundred replies showed an overwhelming approval of a more democratic organization of educational affairs than obtains anywhere in this country at present. It is significant that these leaders in scientific thought are among the most able and the most successful of the brains of this age. This spiritual revolt against autocracy in education is not an expression of the resentment of the unsuccessful; it is the deliberate judgment of men trained to make deliberate judgments on complex problems. It is at the same time a symptom of the general revolt of all thinking and feeling men and women against the superstition that it is Caesar who makes the world go round.

The public schools of this country were established primarily as instruments of democracy. The nation that would govern itself must train its grandchildren for self-government: hence the little red school-house and hence the monster 3,000-pupil school-house. But while the little red school-house permitted a wide liberty to the

teacher and to the pupils, the modern urban school has gone the way of the department store and other commercial establishments. The era of organization that converted workers into machines also saw the transition of the teacher from a human being dealing with younger human beings to an automatic pedagog adjusted to the carrying out of detailed instructions. The elaborate organization of commerce and industry has performed a useful function in teaching us the economy of division of labor, the intellectual advantages of community life and the ethics of coöperation. We have extended the principles of organization to all phases of human activity, but in adopting the form we have lost sight of the spirit.

The superior efficiency of the modern city school system does not lie in the fact of the greater concentration of power in the superintendent: it lies in the fact that every man and woman is at the assigned post doing intelligently some assigned task. We have overlooked the fact that the military form of organization, which is highly efficient for certain purposes, fails utterly if the men in the ranks conspire to resist their officers. It is not the fact of the graded authority and rigid discipline; it is the spirit of the body that makes an army effective. But the spirit, as was known a number of years ago, is not the letter. The last remnant of medieval political autocracy, the empire of Russia, retains all the forms of an organization that places power and authority in the hands of God's anointed. Yet everyone knows how impotent is the empire and how futile the emperor—everyone, that is, except the poor tsar himself. Not even the Spanish-American republics are less efficient.

The first error in the minds of those who look to the efficiency of autocracy to save us from the stupidity of democ-

racism is the common metonymic one of assuming that democracy means the rule of the uninformed: democracy means the rule of the most competent, but in the interest of, with the assent of, thru the selection of the whole body. A second error arises from confusing the position of headship with the position of leadership. Democracy has need of leaders: autocracy makes use of the boss. We have before us many able bosses: we do not know what able leaders would accomplish in analogous situations. A man may be a good driver without being necessarily a good leader. The great fault in our political democracy has been that we have had no political democracy. We had the forms, still have; but instead of operating our machinery democratically we have submitted to the leadership of those who run behind with whip and rein.

And the farther we go the worse the situation becomes. For the forces that have converted our political machinery into instruments for private gain, the forces that have subordinated the lives of the workers to the instruments of their work, have also dominated the school and the press and the pulpit. As a result the agencies upon which humanity has depended for its instruction in democracy are becoming incapable of teaching democracy. The hope of democracy is still in its schools, but the schools are becoming "standardized" under the influence of a false ideal of "efficiency."

For after all, the first question to consider is always that of ideals, the questions of aims. Under the influence of our rapid commercial and industrial expansion, the common mind has become corrupted; the golden calf has been set up in the market place and there all men worship—most of all, perhaps, those who have the least share in the material "prosperity" of the age. The captains of industry, the priests of the golden calf, set our standards for us, they establish our yardsticks and our bushels; and the measures are pitifully short. Under the in-

fluence of the business man the test of a school has been primarily the test of cost; the question of output has only quantitative significance to the average business man. Now the methods that have been successful in the organization of the department store or of the catenated emporia are transferred bodily to the dispensation of charity and the training of youth. If you measure efficiency by reduced cost per unit, there may be much cause for congratulation; but if you measure efficiency by increased spirituality, increased humanity, increased self-control and increased ability for self-direction—there is still something to be done.

Is it the aim of our society, in establishing schools, to "keep" the children off the streets, out of mischief, and to impart to them the "essentials" of the "three R's"?—then the most efficient plan is to construct monster barracks, with rooms holding from sixty to seventy-five children (according to the size of the children), place the "rooms" in charge of young women who need to support themselves but prefer a genteel occupation, and who would therefore accept genteel positions at very low pay; place groups of "rooms" in charge of older women known to be "strong in discipline," and place several such barracks in charge of gentlemen of high executive ability—that is, the ability to formulate rules, and strength of personality to enforce the rules. If the children are kept in their seats most of the time, the cost of cleaning the building and replacing the furniture will be reduced to a minimum. If the lessons are taught from books and black-boards the cost of new-fangled apparatus and "illustrative material" will be comparatively small. If the work is confined to the "essentials" there will be no need for high-priced supervisors of special subjects. If rigid "discipline" is maintained, the cost of truant officers and of much clerical work will be saved. If the teachers are selected by the commissioners or the trustees on the basis of

personal interview or personal recommendations from aldermen, the salary schedule can be kept very low. If the teachers are required to keep all the records, or better, if no records at all are kept, clerk-hire and stationery bills may be economized. If the courses of study and the methods of instruction that were good enough for our grandparents are maintained inviolate year after year, another source of expense can be eliminated. If we refuse to be influenced by the maudlin sentimentalists who would establish special classes for the lame and the halt and the blind, who would keep pupils in school when it is obvious that the parents need the financial help that their commercial exploitation could yield, who would pay a teacher the same salary as a salesman—we shall be able to increase the efficiency of the schools (as measured by the ratio of child-days to dollars spent) still more. You will notice that the methods for increasing efficiency here suggested are the methods that are so effective in the autocratic administration of successful business enterprises.

On the other hand, it is the aim of our society, in establishing schools, to convert the raw material from the nurseries into healthy, alert, industrious, modest, self-respecting, skillful men and women capable of doing their duty without fear of the devil or the hangman, capable of conducting their affairs without waiting for a tip from the editor, able and willing to do the day's work while the larder is still full?—then we must have healthy teachers who appreciate health and will not sacrifice it to the demands of a complex machinery of administration. Then we must have alert teachers who are quick to catch not only an error on geography or grammar, but also an infringement upon human dignity or an imposition upon human weakness. Then we must have teachers who are industrious because they do the work they love under conditions that tempt them to sing—not shout—instead of teachers who are weary on Monday morning and exhausted Friday after-

noon—and show that work is a burden most of the time. Then we must have teachers who can hold up their heads modestly! Then we must have teachers who cannot be imposed upon by principal or superintendent, who cannot be sneered at by the butcher or the salesman, who cannot be brow-beaten by the commissioner or the janitor, and by the same token we must have principals and superintendents who can maintain their dignity without imposing upon those with whom they work, and we must have commissioners who do not seek to brow-beat their employees, and we must have janitors who are not jealous of their authority. Then we must have trained and conscientious teachers and principals and superintendents, who fear no reproach but their own. But such teachers and principals and superintendents do not form a hierarchy, they form a republic of differentiated functions—and they cost money, lots of it. You will notice that the methods for increasing efficiency here hinted are not the methods of autocratic control evolved by successful business enterprises, but the methods of those successful institutions operated for the advancement of learning—certain types of universities and research laboratories.

It is in the last analysis not an issue between efficiency and democracy that we shall be called upon to solve, but the issue between ideals of humanity and ideals of personal aggrandizement thru exploitation of others. Efficiency can be achieved thru democracy if our aims are concerned with the advancement of the men and women who make up society; efficiency can be achieved thru autocracy if our aim is to advance a Croker or a Cox at the expense of the rest of the community, or to advance each in the proportion of his disposition and ability to grind the faces and trample the bodies of others.

If our schools are to serve society, they must be guided by the ideals our society seeks to realize. If we are to help make real the dreams of humanity it is not sufficient that we read to the



children the words of the prophets and poets: we must live day by day in the spirit of the dreams. Otherwise our schools will not be efficient, however well satisfied the taxpayers and the bureaus of municipal research may be. And the spirit of manhood and womanhood cannot be made to permeate a school that is dominated by the method of the factory boss, or the political boss or the military boss: to be efficient for humanity, the schools must be conducted in the spirit of democracy.

#### A DEFINITE MOVE TOWARD EFFICIENCY IN KEEPING RECORDS

The following letter has been issued by the Committee of Standardization, of the High School Teachers' Association of New York City:

Principals of High Schools,

The City of New York.

Gentlemen:

This Committee desires to make a careful study of the different forms and blanks in use in the several high schools. We desire to make this study with a view to proposing to the High School Teachers' Association the adoption of such forms as are necessary to the proper administration of the schools. In justice to the tax-payer, we believe it is right that the City Superintendent, the Board of Education, and the Board of Estimate be furnished with carefully prepared reports, accurate and detailed, which shall show the exact conditions prevailing in the High Schools.

In order that these reports may be furnished by principals and teachers with the least expenditure of time and effort, the initial record forms and blanks should be uniform. In no other way can we hope to have the figures which are furnished by one school mean the same thing as those furnished by any other school.

It is not the intention of the committee that a school shall be limited to the use of only such blanks as receive the approval of the Association, we desire, rather, to attempt to make uniform only the blanks which are fundamentally essential, necessary and sufficient, for the purpose of furnishing complete and intelligible reports.

May we expect your coöperation in this matter? If you have not already done so, will you please designate some member of your faculty—one who is well acquainted with the forms, reports, blanks, etc., in use in your school—to act on this committee?

The Committee will meet in the Reception Room, DeWitt Clinton High School, 59th Street and Tenth Avenue, Friday, May 10th, at 4 P. M.

Yours very truly,

HARRY B. PENHOLLOW, *Chairman.*

**THE SCHOOL** is the one institution under more or less of public control, which is charged, in so far as it deliberately ministers to liberal education, with responsibility for the elevation and diffusion of higher standards of appreciation and utilization. A purposive program to this end is a present educational need. When it shall be evolved, it seems probable that, in comparison with it, our pitiful drills in algebra, Latin, text-book physics, ancient history, elementary logic, and English composition, will make a poor exhibition as supposed means of genuine liberal education.—David Snedden, in "Atlantic" for January.

#### ASPECTS OF VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE

HENRIETTA RODMAN

THE SUBJECT of vocational guidance has seven distinct aspects:

1. The investigation of occupations such as is now being carried on by the Committee on Women's Work under the auspices of the Russell Sage Foundation. The secretary of the committee is Miss Mary Van Kleeck.

2. The study of vocational schools and courses, such as is now being made by the educational department of the Women's Municipal League of Boston.

3. The study of individuals to discover their vocational tendencies. This work was done by Prof. Frank Parsons and is now being done along three different lines by Mrs. Helen T. Woolley of the Child Labor Committee, Cincinnati, Ohio; by Mr. Gustave Blumenthal, of the Y. M. C. A., and at the Wadleigh High School, both in New York City.

4. The giving of vocational information. There are five methods now employed in this work.

A very popular one is the giving of vocational talks by experts to large or small groups of young people. This method has been followed very successfully by Miss Kate E. Turner of Erasmus Hall, Brooklyn, N. Y.

The second method is the publication of vocational pamphlets. This has been followed by the Students' Aid Committee of the High School Teachers' Association, New York, Mr. E. W. Weaver, chairman, by the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston.

A third method is the correlation of the vocational work with the work in English. This has been done most successfully in the Central High School in Grand Rapids, Mich. Principal, Mr. Jesse B. Davis.\* A committee has recently been formed by the English Teachers' Association of New York to take up this matter, chairman, Henrietta Rodman.

The fourth method is the direct teaching of facts about occupations. This work is now being done in the Wadleigh High School in New York. This course is an attempt to give the girls the power to analyze and develop their own personality and character, to study and to minister to the needs of the community thru the wise choice of a vocation and thru their work as citizens. The High School Teachers' Association of New York City has appointed a committee, chairman, Henrietta Rodman, to plan a course similar to this to be presented to the Board of Education and the Board of Superintendents.

The fifth method is by the use of libraries. Miss Tyler of the N. Y. Public Library is chairman of a committee to develop this work.

5. Placement. This work is being done most effectively by Mr. Weaver at the Boys' High School, Brooklyn, N. Y. Good work is being done by the Alliance Employment Bureau, New York.

6. Following up those who have

been placed in occupations. This is being done by Miss Alice Barrows of the Vocational Guidance Survey, by Miss Olivia Leventritt in connection with the Girls' Hebrew Technical School, by Mr. George H. Chatfield of the Permanent Census Board, all of New York City, and by Mrs. Woolley in Cincinnati.

7. Scholarships for gifted and needy pupils are provided by the Schmidlapp Foundation, Cincinnati, director, Miss Edith Campbell—when the opportunity for suitable training is not available at public expense. This work is done only in Cincinnati.

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THE COMMUNITY'S judgment of the intellect and character of its teachers is not recorded in figure or presentable in diagrams. But certain facts show, that, altho we pay to teachers of children hardly more than to skilled laborers, and to professors in the hundred best colleges of the country only about as much as to successful commercial travelers, we regard the teachers, in each case, as an abler class. First, the number of teachers who are offered higher salaries in other occupations is very large. In the second place, a large number of women teachers are chosen in marriage by men of ability, and a large number of men teachers are accepted in marriage by women of ability. In the third place, the recent organizations for public welfare, such as those for the prevention of tuberculosis, the administration of charitable funds, the establishment of playgrounds, the abolition of child labor and the forwarding of international peace, have found among teachers many of the men and women best qualified to do their work. It is, in fact, generally recognized that teachers in all grades are paid less than they deserve, are respectable and trustworthy citizens, and are more competent to manage men, money and opinions for the public service than any other group, save little.—From Edward L. Thorndike's "Education."

\* See THE AMERICAN TEACHER, March, 1912.

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**OBEDIENCE** is a tool to be used with wisdom and discretion. It is not an *end* either in discipline or in life.—S. M. G.

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